

# Schwetzingen castle and mythology assignment



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Sweetening Castle has a very close tie to the Iliad and Greek gods and heroes. This can be seen when visiting the castles gardens. The gardens have statues and temples dedicated to Apollo, Zeus, sphinxes, and Athena. The placement of the statues in a garden in Germany shows the effect and values of the Greek people transpiring through time. The garden was created as a place to go and relax and reflect and the statues and temples serve to remind visitors to the garden of the values they stand for. The Iliad was a very influential piece of writing that continues to influence and interest people to his day. Age 2 Sweetening castle is located in the German state of Baden-Heartburn. It served as the summer home for electors palatine Karl III Phillip and Charles Theodore. The castle is located in the city of Sweetening (a place you wouldn't think would be so highly connected to Greek mythology). The Sweetening festival is held there annually. Sweetening castle was first built in 1350 roughly 2, 112 years after the Iliad was written (although the exact date/year is not known). The castle was originally very small and was surrounded by a moat. The castle was typical of castles in Europe at the time and was really not very exciting.

However In 1697 a man named Charles Theodore took the castle to a whole new level when he added two wings as well as its beautiful Baroque gardens. Most of the statues in the garden were bought at auction, and are still considered to be high quality pieces of art. When the gardens of the castle were being constructed Germany especially when it comes to gardening was going through a transition from French formal and Anglo Chinese to something very different and highly influenced y the roman and Greek

empire. The castle itself has little influence from the Greek empire other than some domes and pillars but the garden was another story.

The garden meant as a place of solitude and relaxation choose to pay homage to Greek gods and heroes. Rosenberg (1999) noted " Homers characters strand apart from the story of the Trojan war as a sculpture stands apart from its background"(p. 1 19. ) so do the sculptures in Sweetening castle. When looking at images of Sweetening castle the connection to history and mythology is very apparent. Rosenberg also noted (1999) Mycenaean adopted Athena and Hear from pre- page 3 Hellenic cultures; they combined their Zeus with the Minoan Zeus of Crete; and they adopted Apollo and Aphrodite from Anatolia and the near east respectively" (p. 06. ) Many countries and cultures followed their lead and adopted these Greek gods and heroes as well. The castle is surrounded by gardens and within the gardens are statues of various Greek heroes and gods. The statues give insight into the culture and values of the time of their creation. When Greece was thriving it was not unusual for many people to be alliterate. Because of this artist found a way to tell a story through their sculptures. The people who were unable to read the stories had to know that the gods were great and powerful so the images of them reflected that.

The sculptures that can be seen show Greek figures (men, and women). The figures are noble/regal and ooze of pride and honor which were very important values to the Greek. The four main characters from Greek mythology that can be found in the gardens are: Zeus, Apollo, Athena/ Minerva (Roman), and the Sphinx. The Zeus statue is looking to the side and own and he is wearing a crown of leaves on his head. His demeanor is fierce

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and denotes a tone of power but still is very emotive. When looking at the statue from different angles his demeanor can be interpreted in many ways.

However it is apparent when looking at the statue that he is no regular/mortal man. He is very strong and muscular and you can tell that he is a man of power. Being a Greek god however requires more than strength you must also be wise and patient which can also be seen in the statue.

When looking at the statue you can almost see Zeus contemplating how he can trick Agamemnon into attacking the Trojan: " while gods and mortals slept, Zeus considered how he could best bring honor to Achilles and kill many of the Greeks". Zeus was the all-powerful god Page 4 And he had the power to pass judgment on any and all.

Zeus was the epitome of justice and righteousness, but also a vengeful and apathetic god. The statue and its expression helped to remind people that we are only mortal men, and to the gods we are nothing but an annoyance. It was important for the Roman people to know the Gods were strong and powerful and this was reflected in this statue of Zeus. Also in the gardens (with his own temple) is Apollo. The temple is open and contains a pillared dome with a marble statue of Apollo within it. Apollo is seen playing a harp and gazing off. On the ceiling of the dome is a very elaborate sun with outstretched rays.

The sun can be seen as a metaphor for the gods: giving life as well as destroying it. Polio's face is expressionless but he looks peaceful and in deep thought. This is a reflection of Greek values in that they value intelligence as well as things of beauty including music. From the look on his face you would

guess that he has not yet learned of Agamemnon rejecting his daughter's gift. If he had you would see an angry god shooting arrows down the mountain, instead of the peaceful sun god pictured in the statue. Rosenberg noted (1999) "Apollo is the principal god of Homers Olio's" (p. 11). Apollo is often pictured as a tempestuous god but this statue shows another version of the sun god. The statue symbolizes what he represents the sun and the nature of the sun: it gives as well as takes. Behind the palace you can find the temple of Athena/Minerva. The temple says that it is dedicated to Minerva there are a few icons which are associated with the goddess of war Athena (the owl and the spear). Rosenberg stated (1999) "Athena is the favorite child of Zeus, she inspires and guides" (p. 122). This might be why she was put in the garden.

The statue is very different than those of Zeus and Apollo because she is wearing a toga, while the men were almost naked. Women in Greek time were wise and powerful and respected, showing a naked woman especially a goddess would be somewhat taboo. Athena symbolizes our (humans) hunger for knowledge and information juxtaposed against our penchant for violence. The gardens of the palace were designed as a place to escape and relax and reflect. Athena herself was known to take excursions with Persephone to collect wildflowers and escape for a time. Scattered throughout the garden as well are sphinxes.

Sphinxes were found throughout Greek mythology and acted as oracles. The sphinx is a symbol of our (humans) need for information be it good or bad. Because the sphinxes are in the garden also reflects the use of the garden as a place to think and reflect. Some of the sphinxes (four) sit facing a fountain  
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which is dedicated to Zeus. Although sphinxes can be seen in many different cultures (most popular Egyptian) they also played a role in Greek mythology. In one story a sphinx killed herself after asking a riddle to Oedipus and him answering it correctly.